

H.B. No. 6824: An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue.

Submitted By:  
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Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Martha D'Urso. I work for The Kennedy Center. We among the 500+ member agencies of the Connecticut Association of Nonprofits (CT Nonprofits.)

I would like to share my concerns with H.B. 6824, An Act Concerning The State Budget For The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2017, And Making Appropriations Therefor And Other Provisions Related To Revenue. In particular, I wanted to express my sincere concerns to the funding reductions in the DAY SUPPORT SERVICE AREA. This funding reduction would threaten critical services to individuals and families in our service area.

As you are aware, this is the most vulnerable population. This population will not improve to the degree of never having to rely on the hard working tax payers of Ct. With increasing waste in state and local government, Nonprofit Agencies are the best equipped to work efficiently with tax payers money. It is our nature, our purpose and dedication to achieve substantial outcomes regarding this population with less money. Daily, highly trained educated staff not only supports this population, but frequently use their own resource, their own over time in providing the best possible service. Please show fiscally responsible taxpayers that this is not the area of the budget to make cuts. It has been demonstrated over and over that in the long term, the proposed cuts would just increase expenses for the citizens of Connecticut by relying on state agencies instead of non-profit organizations.

The proposed cuts, coupled with four rounds of rescissions/budget modification dating back to late 2012, have put enormous pressure onto an already severely depleted system. The reality is that nonprofit providers have been pushed to our breaking point due to the lack of investment over the past two decades. Chronic underfunding has already forced many nonprofits to close, compete against one another for scarce resources, lay off employees, reduce benefit packages; altogether creating a win or lose system that weakens the entire nonprofit sector and threatens its sustainability.

As members of the Appropriations Committee work toward creating your 'Recommended Budget' for SFY16 and 17, I urge you to restore these harmful cuts to ensure critical programs and services are available to the residents of Connecticut. I'd also like to respectfully remind you that investing in the nonprofit sector will improve service delivery, increase economic activity, and save taxpayer money; a "win-win" for policymakers working to strengthen the economy, the nonprofit workforce trying to make ends meet, and most importantly, the clients and their families who count-on efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality services in our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, or for additional information.

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